



Close the gap!

Fully fund basic education now

TALKING POINTS

- Per Washington's constitution, our state government's **paramount duty** is to provide a basic education for all of our children.
- The level of **per-student spending** affects children's prospects for educational achievement and future earning power.
- However, 40 years of failed policies created a broken and unsustainable system and a **huge funding gap** between what the State provides and what our children need to succeed.
- **The damage from the gap is statewide:** overcrowded classrooms; lack of textbooks and learning materials; loss of arts and sports programs; unsafe buildings; overwhelmed teachers; unacceptable dropout rates; and inequity of resources and opportunity between communities.
- Local school districts have been forced to address the funding gap with **local levies** that were never intended to fund basic education.
- In the **McCleary decision** of 2012, the Washington State Supreme Court ruled unanimously that the State had failed its paramount duty and ordered it to close the funding gap by 2018. The legislature has come up with a plan, but it has delayed on a funding solution.
- Because of its size, the funding gap **can't be closed by budget cuts alone** — that would devastate vital state services.
- **We need new revenue:** sufficient to fully fund basic education, sustainable through good times and bad, based on everyone paying their fair share, and accountable to the public.
- We are Washington's Paramount Duty, a broad-based **network of parents**. Our mission is to compel the State to fully fund our children's basic education now.